

CLAIMS

The following complete listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A spherical coated capsule comprising
 - (a) ~~a coating-free capsule having (i) a liquid or viscous core and (ii),~~
 - (b) ~~a seamless solid shell surrounding this core, and~~
 - (c) ~~(b) a seamless, solid coating surrounding on said shell coating-free capsule,~~wherein
 - the diameter of the coated capsule is in the range of 5 - 9 mm,
 - the solid coating comprises at least one sugar or sugar-alcohol in an amount from about 30 - 90% (m/m), based on the total mass of the coated capsule,
 - the diameter of the shell coating-free capsule is in the range of 3 - 7 mm,
 - the thickness of the shell ~~of said coating-free capsule~~ is in the range of 20 -200 µm,
 - the ratio of shell thickness to shell diameter of said coating-free capsule is in the range of 0.004:1 - 0.04:1 ,
 - the shell ~~of said coating-free capsule~~ contains 70 - 90 % (m/m) gelatine or alginate and 10 - 30 % (m/m) plasticiser, based on the solids content of said shell, and
 - the core has a flavouring content in the range of 1 - 100 % (m/m), based on the total mass of the core, wherein the plasticiser is selected from the group that consists of glycerol, propylene glycol, sorbitol, maltitol, and combinations thereof.
2. (previously presented) The spherical coated capsule according to claim 1, wherein an intermediate layer or intermediate layers are arranged between said shell and said coating, for improving the adhesion between shell and coating.
3. (currently amended) The spherical coated capsule according to claim 2, wherein the intermediate layer consists of (i) gum arabic, maltodextrin, starch, sugar, sugar alcohol, gelatine, or a mixture thereof thereof, and, optionally, (ii) water.

4. (previously presented) The spherical coated capsule according to claim 1, the coating having one or more outer layers providing a smooth surface, the outer layer or layers consisting of (i) a sugar and/or sugar alcohol, and, optionally, water.
5. (currently amended) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein
 - the diameter of the shell ~~coating-free capsule~~ is in the range of 4.5 - 6.5 mm,
 - the thickness of the shell is in the range of 50 - 150 μ m,
 - the shell thickness to capsule shell diameter ratio is in the range of 0.01:1 - 0.03:1.
6. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the shell is prepared from a mixture containing gelatine and plasticiser which has a gel point in the range between 15 °C and 60 °C.
7. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the gelatine comprises a gelatine having a Bloom value of at least 200.
8. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to Claim 7, wherein the gelatine further comprises a gelatine having a Bloom value of 0, a fish gelatine having a Bloom value of < 200, or both.
9. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1, wherein the gelatine comprises a cold water fish gelatine, a fish gelatine having a gel point of < 20 °C, or both.
10. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the liquid or viscous core contains a sweetener that has been selected from the group that consists of thaumatin, neohesperidine, miraculin and mixtures thereof.

11. (currently amended) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the concentration of the plasticiser in the shell is ~~10—30 % (m/m)~~ 15 - 20 % (m/m) based on the total solids content of the shell.
12. (cancelled)
13. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the gelatine has been selected from the group that consists of pig gelatine, cattle gelatine, chicken gelatine, fish gelatine and mixtures thereof.
14. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the shell contains a sweetener selected from the group that consists of sucralose, aspartame, acesulfame K, thaumatin, Na saccharine, neohesperidin and mixtures thereof.
15. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the shell contains gellan gum.
16. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1 wherein the shell contains 0.4 - 3 % (m/m) gellan gum, based on the solids content of the shell.
17. (previously presented) A method for the preparation of a capsule according to claim 1, comprising:
 - pumping a liquid or viscous core material and a gelatine or alginate-containing curable shell mixture simultaneously through a concentric multi-component nozzle so that they drip into a cooling liquid with the formation of a capsule,
 - drying said capsule, and
 - coating the resulting dried capsule, optionally only after applying an intermediate layer or intermediate layers to the dried capsule.

18. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1, wherein the shell is prepared from a mixture containing gelatine and plasticiser which has a gel point in the range between 20 °C and 40 °C.
19. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1, wherein the shell is prepared from a mixture containing gelatine and plasticiser which has a gel point in the range between 25 °C and 35 °C.
20. (previously presented) The spherical capsule according to claim 1, wherein a gelatine having a Bloom value in the range of 240 - 300.
21. (new) A spherical coated capsule comprising
- (a) a liquid or viscous core,
 - (b) a shell surrounding this core, and
 - (c) a seamless, solid coating on said shell, wherein
 - the diameter of the coated capsule is in the range of 5 - 9 mm,
 - the solid coating comprises at least one sugar or sugar-alcohol in an amount from about 30 - 90% (m/m), based on the total mass of the coated capsule,
 - the diameter of the shell is in the range of 3 - 7 mm,
 - the thickness of the shell is in the range of 20 -200 µm,
 - the ratio of shell thickness to shell diameter is in the range of 0.004:1 - 0.04:1 ,
 - the shell contains 70 - 90 % (m/m) gelatine or alginate and 10 - 30 % (m/m) plasticiser, based on the solids content of said shell, and
 - the core has a flavouring content in the range of 1 - 100 % (m/m), based on the total mass of the core, wherein the plasticiser is selected from the group that consists of glycerol, propylene glycol, maltitol and combinations thereof.